

MAN OF STEEL™

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DC
COMICS™

21



THE NEW 52!

NIGHTWING

KYLE
HIGGINS
BRETT
BOOTH
NORM
RAPMUND

AUG 2013

RATED T TEEN

DCCOMICS.COM

CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.
SEVERAL YEARS AGO...

AGAINST
THE GLASS!
AGAINST THE
GLASS!

YOU PRESS
FLESH AGAINST THE
WINDOW, YOUR CHANCES
OF GETTING OUT OF
HERE ALIVE RISE
DRAMATICALLY.

REMEMBER--
NOBODY WANTS
A HERO.

THERE
AIN'T NONE
LEFT IN THIS
CITY, ANY-
HOW!

THERE
AIN'T *NOBODY*
WHO'S GONNA
SAVE--

HRM!

HEY.



WE'RE NOT ALL GONE!

GHH!

WHEN THEY ASK, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN...

"...TELL 'EM SLIPSHIFT'S STILL OUT THERE."

LATER...



--WHILE EYEWITNESS REPORTS CREDIT THE ONE-TIME VIGILANTE SLIPSHIFT WITH DISARMING THE ROBBERS AND SAVING ALL THE HOSTAGES.

CLICK

DAMN STRAIGHT.

WHICH
LEADS TO OUR
MAIN STORY OF
THE EVENING, THE
CONFIRMATION
THAT SLIPSHIFT IS
STILL OPERATING
IN CHICAGO.
WHILE THE "THE
MASK MURDERS"
CLAIMED THE LIVES
OF VIGILANTES
THROUGHOUT
THE CITY--



--STARTING
WITH CHICAGO'S
TWO MOST PROMINENT,
AETHER AND
GHOSTWALKER--



--TONIGHT'S
SIGHTING SERVES
AS CORROBORATION
THAT AT LEAST ONE
VIGILANTE IS STILL
ACTIVE.

ALTHOUGH
THE QUESTION
NOW
BECOMES--

--HOW
LONG WILL
HE LAST?



AS LONG
AS IT TAKES
TO CLEAN UP
THIS--

THRK

YOU SHOULD
HAVE STAYED
HIDDEN.

AND DOES
HIS PRESENCE
MEAN THE MASK
MURDERS ARE
OFFICIALLY
OVER?



HYUK!

NO...
NOT...YET...

...NOT...



ALL
THAT AND
MORE OVER THE
NEXT HOUR. BUT
FIRST, TURNING
TO SPORTS...



Life's full of
hard choices.

CHICAGO MUSEUM OF SCIENCE
AND INDUSTRY.

NOW...

The Prankster's hacked my suit, blacked out my lenses, and dropped me into a backdraft exhibit.

Oxygen's already getting sucked out of the room. At this point--

--the fire will damn near explode as soon as air hits it.

But that's not my main problem.

I came here tonight for two reasons.

First, to stop the Prankster from torturing a man named John Conaway.

And second...

...because I need the Prankster's help.

I know, right?

YOU'RE OVER-COMPLICATING THIS, NIGHTWING.

IF YOU DON'T WANT TO **BURN ALIVE**, SIMPLY TAKE OFF YOUR **MASK**. IT'LL MAKE FINDING THE PROPER HATCH **MUCH EASIER**.

Two ways out, but one of them creates an inferno.

What's a guy to do?

Might be able to find the exhaust door by feel. Might.

But if I pick the wrong one, it's death by backdraft.

And I'm running out of time.

FSHHH

Other than put out the fire.

HM. CLEVER.

THOUGH IT ONLY SOLVES **HALF** THE PROBLEM. YOU STILL HAVE TO FIND A WAY--

DC COMICS™ PRESENTS: **NIGHTWING** IN

CO\$T OF LIVING



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NIGHTWING CREATED BY MARV WOLFMAN AND GEORGE PÉREZ

OOF!

WELL,
THAT'S
THAT
THEN.

KLACK
KLACK

Only gonna
get one shot
at this.

NO!

Make it count,
Grayson.

FA-HWK

KLACK
KLACK



NEXT
TIME YOU
SHOULD TRY
WEARING
FLATS.

THIS
"EHN" IS
FUNNY TO
YOU?

WELL,
NOT "HAHA"
FUNNY.
BUT I DID
JUST BREAK OUT
OF YOUR TRAP AND
TAKE YOU DOWN--
LITERALLY--WITH MY
EYES CLOSED.

YES,
WELL, IF YOU
THINK THIS
IS OVER,
THEN--

FREEZE!

THIS IS
YOUR LAST
WARNING! DROP
YOUR HOSTAGE
AND PUT YOUR
HANDS ON YOUR
HEAD!

PUT
HIM DOWN!
NOW!

If I turn over the
Prankster now, I
may not be able to
get to him again.

Dammit.

THIS THING YOU DID TO MY MASK--CAN YOU UNDO IT?

-TSK--
A TWELVE-
YEAR-OLD WITH
AN ABACUS
COULD--

THEN START
SLIDING BEADS. I'M
YOUR BEST CHANCE OF
GETTING OUT OF HERE
ALIVE, BUT ONLY IF I
CAN SEE.

I'LL NEED
ACCESS TO MY
HANDS.

GET
READY.

WAIT,
WHAT'S
HE--?

KA-SHOOOM

WE LOST
HIM!

NO
VISUAL!

DOES
ANYBODY
HAVE EYES
ON THE
TARGET?!

SHRKK



I ADMIRE THE
DEDICATION,
GUYS

OOF!

HONEST

BUT I'M NOT
REALLY LOOKING
FOR ANYTHING
SERIOUS RIGHT
NOW

AGH!

THUNK!

UGH!

WAIT
FOR ME
HA

IT'S NOT
YOU, IT'S
ME

GAH!

WELL...
IT'S A LITTLE
BIT YOU

SNIFF...
I THINK WE
USE THE SAME
CONDITIONER

WHAT AN
D.O.T.

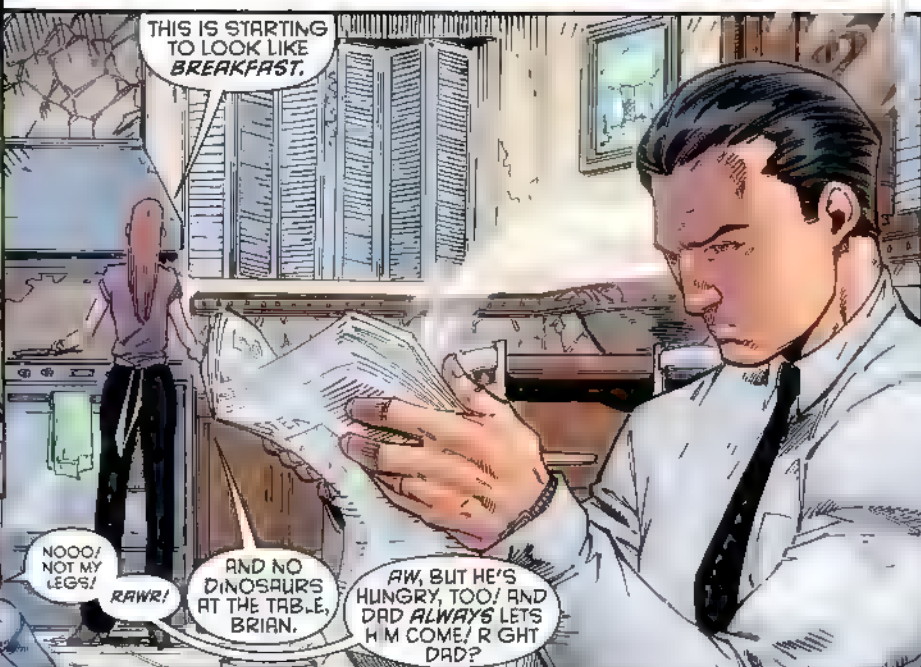
AND HERE
I WAS GOING
TO LEAVE YOU
CONSCIOUS

OH
WELL...

KRAK!



ALL RIGHT, EVERYBODY GRAB A SEAT.



THIS IS STARTING TO LOOK LIKE BREAKFAST.

NOOO! NOT MY LEGS!

RAWR!

AND NO DINOSAURS AT THE TABLE, BRIAN.

AW, BUT HE'S HUNGRY, TOO! AND DAD ALWAYS LETS HIM COME! RIGHT DAD?

WHY IS A GOTHAM VIGILANTE HERE IN CHICAGO?!

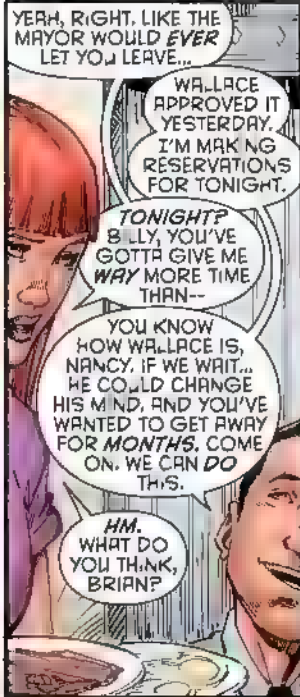
WHAT'S WRONG, DADDY?

HMP OH, UM... NOTHING, BUDDY. DAD'S JUST THINKING.

'BOUT WHAT?

ABOUT WHETHER YOUR MOM IS GONNA BE MAD WHEN I TELL HER WE'RE LEAVING FOR VACATION TODAY.

IT'S A GOTHAM VIGILANTE HERE IN CHICAGO?



YEAH, RIGHT, LIKE THE MAYOR WOULD EVER LET YOU LEAVE...

WALLACE APPROVED IT YESTERDAY. I'M MAKING RESERVATIONS FOR TONIGHT.

TONIGHT? BILLY, YOU'VE GOTTA GIVE ME WAY MORE TIME THAN--

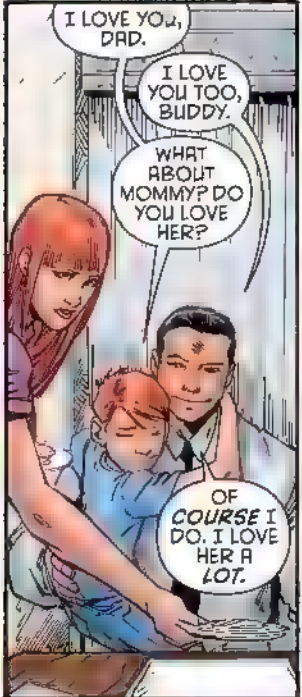
YOU KNOW HOW WALLACE IS, NANCY. IF WE WAIT... HE COULD CHANGE HIS MIND, AND YOU'VE WANTED TO GET AWAY FOR MONTHS. COME ON, WE CAN DO THIS.

HM. WHAT DO YOU THINK, BRIAN?



DO YOU WANNA TAKE A TRIP WITH DADDY?

YEAH!

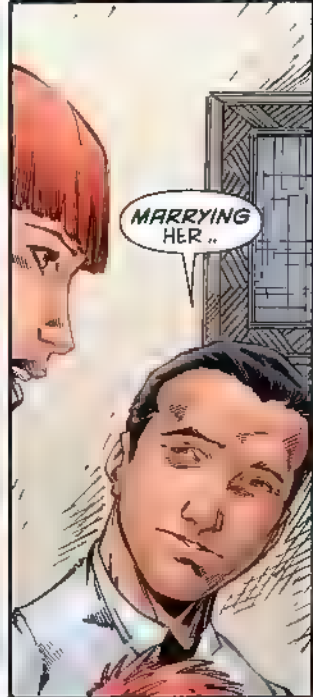


I LOVE YOU, DAD.

I LOVE YOU TOO, BUDDY.

WHAT ABOUT MOMMY? DO YOU LOVE HER?

OF COURSE I DO. I LOVE HER A LOT.



MARRYING HER..

"...WAS THE EASIEST DECISION I EVER MADE."

THE LOOP

UHH...

WHERE, WHERE AM I?

DON'T WORRY ABOUT WHERE YOU ARE. FOCUS ON WHERE YOU *AREN'T*. NAMELY--

--INSIDE A JAIL CELL.

PLAY YOUR CARDS R.GHT HERE, MAYBE YOU CAN *KEEP* IT THAT WAY.

INTERESTED?

WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH ME?

I'M LOOKING FOR SOMEONE, AND THE ONLY LEAD I HAVE IS A THROW-AWAY E-MAIL ADDRESS.

I UNDERSTAND THAT *WOULDN'T* BE A THROWAWAY TO YOU.

AND SUDDENLY YOU'RE WILLING TO TRUST ME?

IN FRONT OF A COMPUTER?

WE'LL MARK THAT DOWN IN THE "MAYBE" COLUMN.

HELL NO.

BUT THE WAY I SEE IT, I ALREADY BEAT YOU DOWN TWICE.

YOU TRY TO GET CUTE, WE'LL MAKE IT A *HAT TRICK*. AND THE NEXT TIME YOU WAKE UP THERE *WON'T* BE DONUTS.

I HELP YOU, YOU STAY OUT OF MY WAY. YOU STOP HUNTING ME. THAT'S THE DEAL.

I CAN AGREE TO THAT.

FINE...



"...THEN A PARTNERSHIP IT IS."

IS IT REALLY THAT SURPRISING THAT THE PRANKSTER AND WHOEVER THE-OTHER-GUY-IS ARE WORKING TOGETHER? NO, IT'S NOT SURPRISING AT ALL.

IF THE POLICE HADN'T SHOWN UP WHEN THEY DID...WELL, I'M CERTAIN I'D BE DEAD AT THE HANDS OF ONE OR THE OTHER.

HOW'S THAT?

GREAT FOR ME, MR. CONAWAY.

I'LL HAVE IT ENCODED AND LIVE ON THE TIMESITE BY MORNING

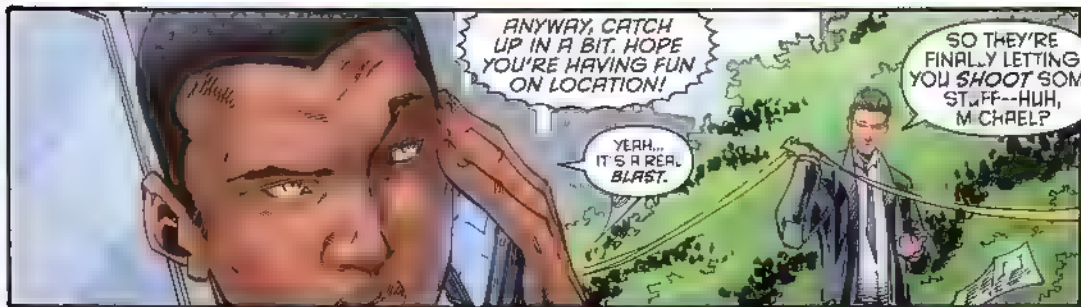
THANKS AGAIN FOR TAKING THE TIME TO TALK ABOUT WHAT HAPP--

BOEEP

OKAY THEN

HEY, IT'S JOEY...JUST WANTED TO GIVE YOU A HEADS-UP, I'LL BE ON THE COUCH WHEN YOU GET BACK.

DICK'S GOING TO TAKE MY ROOM WHILE HE'S IN TOWN.



ANYWAY, CATCH UP IN A BIT. HOPE YOU'RE HAVING FUN ON LOCATION!

YEAH... IT'S A REAL BLAST.

SO THEY'RE FINALLY LETTING YOU SHOOT SOME STUFF--HUH, MICHAEL?

IF BY "SHOOT" YOU MEAN SET THE CAMERA ON THE TRIPOD AND FLIP THE SCREEN AROUND SO MY BOSS CAN FRAME EVERYTHING HIMSELF...THEN SURE. WELCOME TO "CLIMBING THE LADDER," I GUESS.

SEE, I'VE ALWAYS BEEN MORE OF AN ELEVATOR KINDA GUY.

I'M NOT SURE I FOLLOW, DETECTIVE MORGAN.

I'VE TOLD YOU, CALL ME MAXWELL... OR MAX.

AND HERE...

...I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT I MEAN.

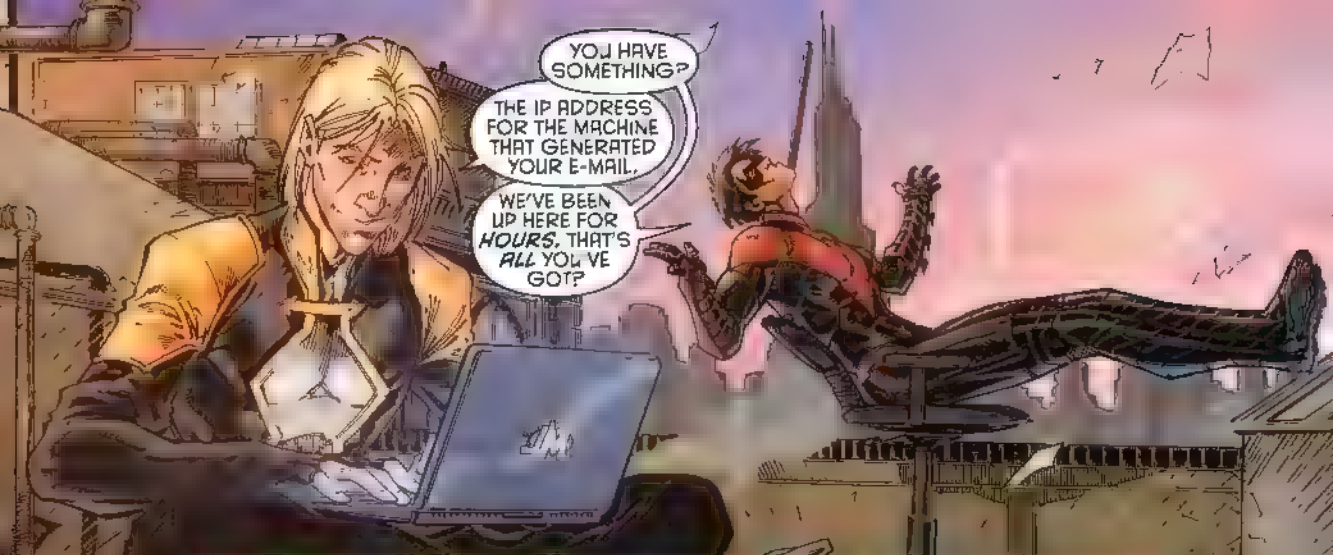
WHAT IS THIS?

IT'S A CAMERA WE RECOVERED FROM THE SCENE, WHICH MAY OR MAY NOT HAVE BELONGED TO THE PRANKSTER.

SO LET ME ASK...

...HOW BADLY DO YOU WANT A CAREER?

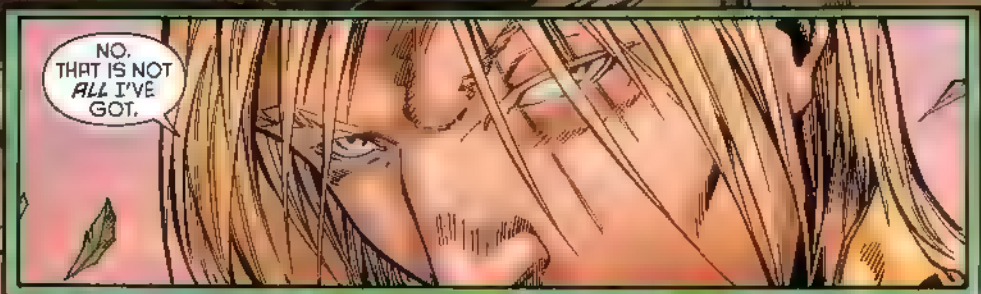
"WELL, THAT'S INTERESTING."



YOU HAVE SOMETHING?

THE IP ADDRESS FOR THE MACHINE THAT GENERATED YOUR E-MAIL.

WE'VE BEEN UP HERE FOR HOURS. THAT'S ALL YOU'VE GOT?



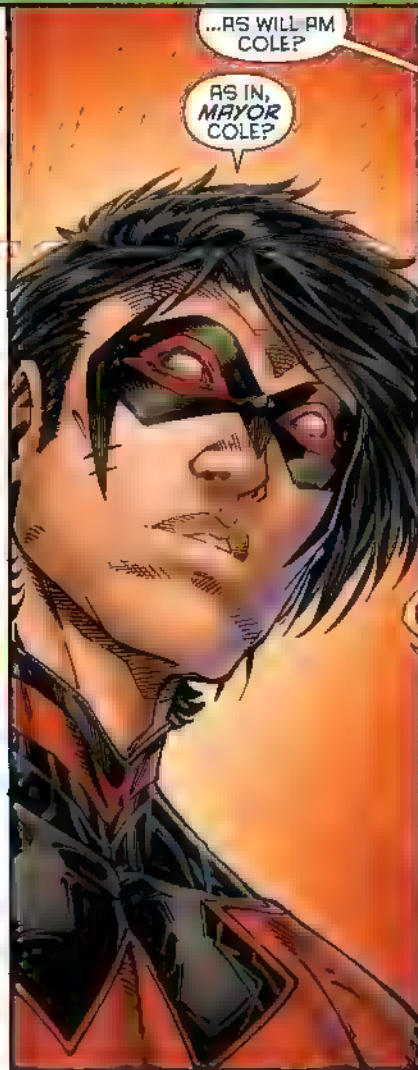
NO. THAT IS NOT ALL I'VE GOT.



I'VE ALSO TAKEN THE LIBERTY OF LOOKING INTO TONY ZUCCO'S RECORD. HE SERVED TWO YEARS IN AN LL NO'S STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITY--

WHEN HE WAS THIRTY, I KNOW HIS RECORD.

THEN YOU MUST ALSO KNOW HE SERVED IN THE SAME STATE PRISON, AT THE EXACT SAME TIME...



...AS WILL AM COLE?

AS IN, MAYOR COLE?



NO. WILLIAM WAS WALLACE'S BROTHER. HE WENT AWAY FOR MANSLAUGHTER. HE'S BEEN DEAD FOR TEN YEARS. WHICH MAKES THIS E-MAIL THAT MUCH MORE INTERESTING.

BECAUSE?

BECAUSE THE SERVER ZUCCO SENT IT FROM...



...IS
INSIDE CITY
HALL.

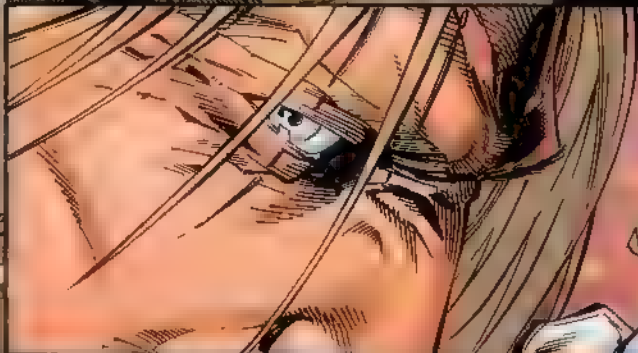
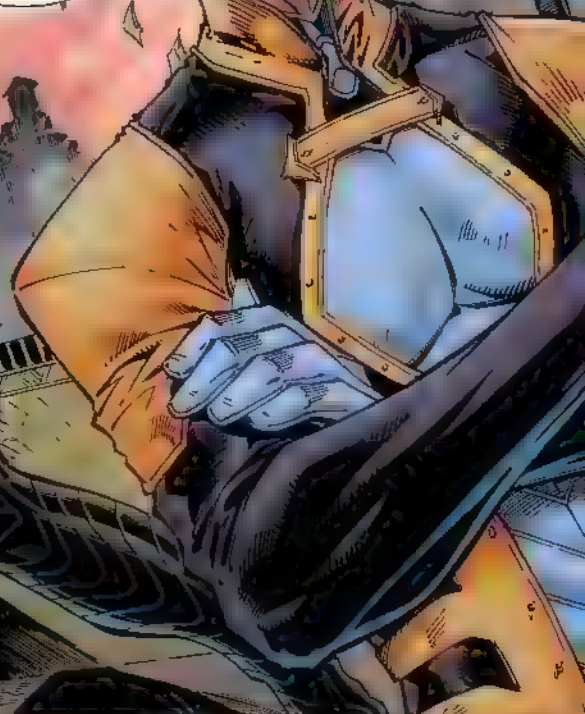
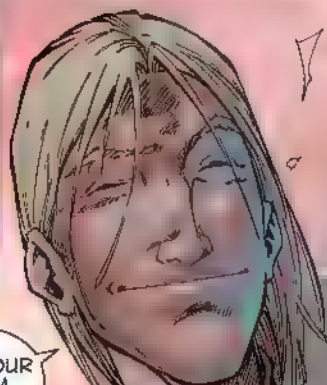
IF I HAD TO PUT
MONEY ON IT, I'D SAY
YOU'RE LOOKING FOR
A MAN NAMED "BILLY
LESTER."

AS FAR AS I
CAN TELL, HE DIDN'T
EXIST BEFORE THREE
YEARS AGO. NOW HE'S
WORKING FOR THE
MAYOR WITHOJT SO
MUCH AS A PICTURE
ON F.I.E.



YOU KNOW, MY
FR END DIDN'T FIND
ANY OF TH S, AND HE'S
PRETTY GOOD WITH
COMPUTERS.

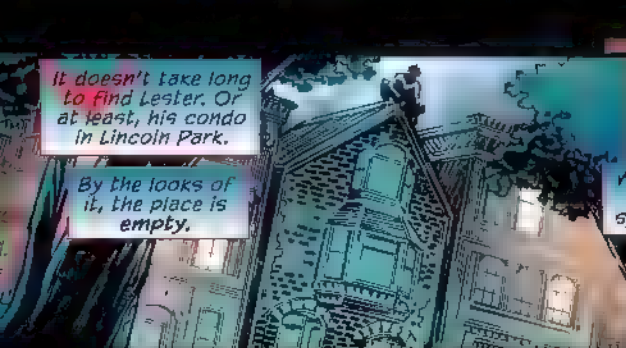
WELL,
THERE'S YOUR
PROBLEM.
"PRETTY
GOOD".



AND YOUR FRIEND
DOESN'T UNDER-
STAND THE TYPE OF
MAN WALLACE COLE
REALLY IS.

NO ONE
DOES. THEY ALL
LOVE HIM
HIM
AND HIS TRAINS.



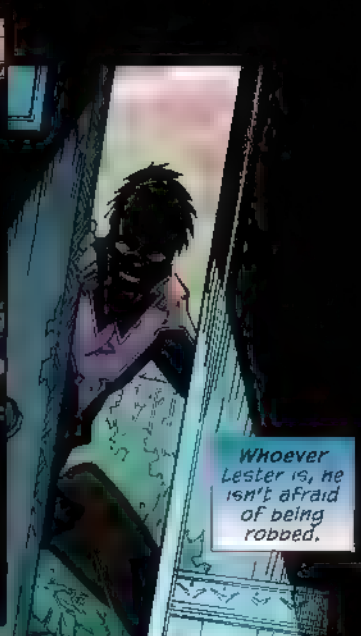


It doesn't take long to find Lester. Or at least, his condo in Lincoln Park.

By the looks of it, the place is empty.



With no alarm system.



Whoever Lester is, he isn't afraid of being robbed.



And he doesn't live alone.



Nothing about this place screams Tony Zucco.

On the surface, I know this isn't right. I know I should leave.



That's the thing about hard choices, though. You tell yourself you have to make them.



You tell yourself there's no other way.

You move across the country, you work with a criminal, you break into someone's home.

You cross lines because you hope beyond hope...

...the ends justify the means.

IT'S REALLY YOU...

The only problem...







GET
THAT [BLEEP]
CAMERA OUT OF
MY FACE!



OOK OOK!
NOW GET THAT [BLEEP] CAMERA OUT
OF MY [BLEEP BLEEEEEEEEEEEEEEP] FACE!



YES...THAT WAS A TALKING CHIMPANZEE
DRINKING AT A BAR AND YELLING VULGARITIES.
IS THAT WHAT MAGIC IS ALL ABOUT?
CRIMES AGAINST NATURE?

I WAS ABLE TO DETERMINE THAT
THIS PANDORA LADY IS SUPPOSED
TO BE IN LEAGUE WITH TWO
MYSTERY GUYS.

A MR. STRANGER AND
ANOTHER GUY WHO'S SO OFF
THE GRID THAT WHEN I ASKED HIS
NAME, SOURCES WOULD SAY, "THE
QUESTION!" AND I'D BE ALL LIKE, "RIGHT!
THE QUESTION IS WHAT'S HIS NAME!"

WE
MAY NEVER
KNOW!



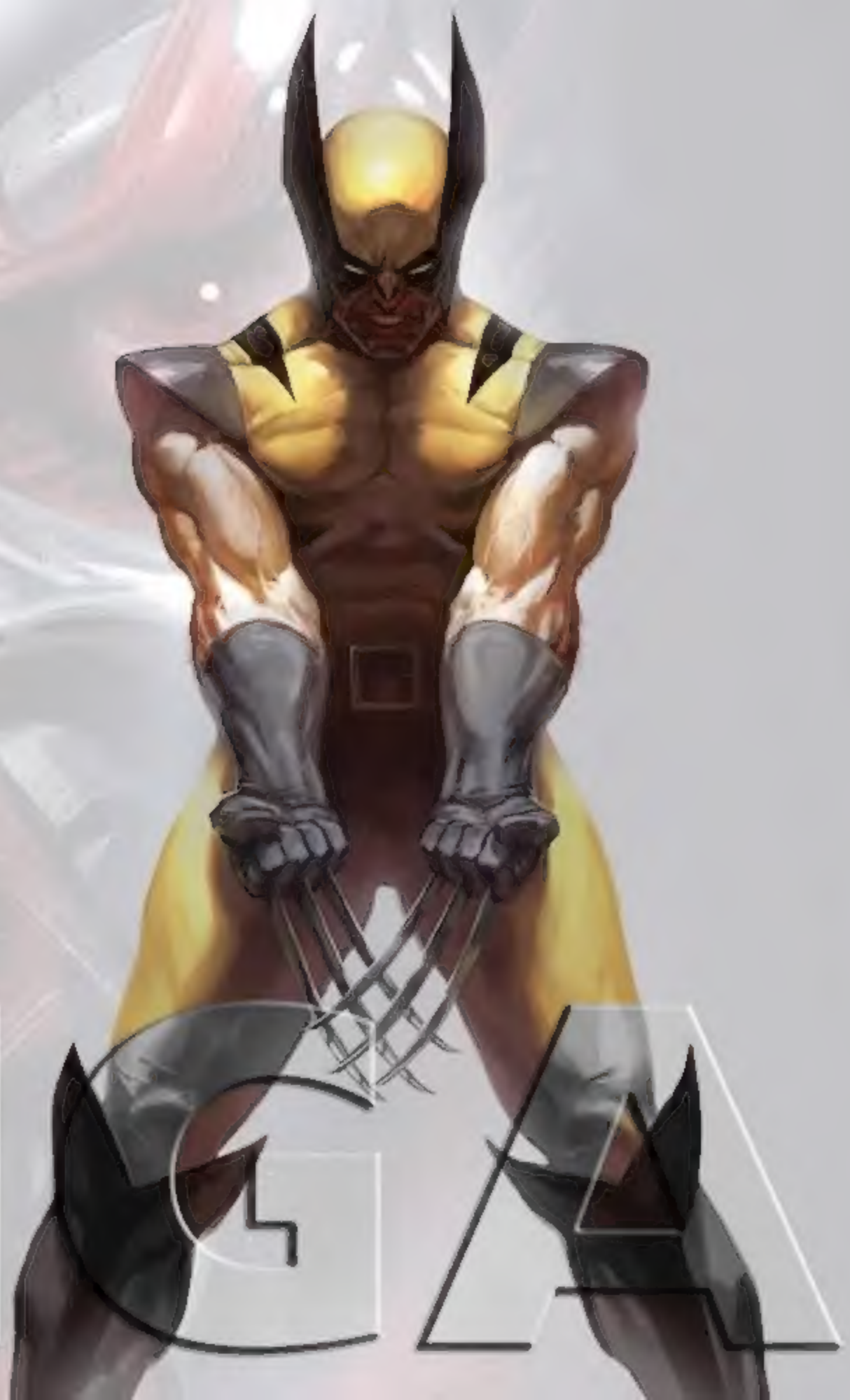
ALL THE NEWS
SPECIAL
REPORT!
THE END TIMES
ARE HERE!
MAGIC NO LONGER
JUST FOR CHILDREN AND
DEGENERATES!
ANIMALS DRINK
LIQUOR!
SHOWGIRLS
SPEAK IN
TONGUES!

CHANNEL
52

THAT IS
SCARY, SCARY
STUFF, BUG!

LET'S HOPE THAT
SOMEBODY LIKE THE JUSTICE
LEAGUE OF AMERICA STEPS IN
AND NIPS ALL OF THIS IN THE BUD
BEFORE SOMETHING...
EVIL... HAPPENS!

MORE FROM
CHANNEL 52 COMING UP!!!



NATHAN